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Summary: A poly Jonathan/Nancy/Steve getting together fic. That's really all there is to it-I fell in love with this ship, and needed to write something about them. I'm mostly on ao3 nowadays, but figured I'd post this here too just in case.

Three's A Crowd

Three's A Crowd (Don't Let It Go For Nobody)

It was a Friday night. Steve, Jonathan and Nancy had just gotten back from winter break, and at Nancy's urging, they were trying to spend more time together—all three of them. Which was how Jonathan found himself sitting right beside none other than Steve Harrington in Nancy's bedroom. She'd ordered pizza almost twenty minutes ago and had finally gone down to wait for it, insisting that the two boys stay where they were, *don't get up on her account*.

And Jonathan didn't have a problem with Steve, not at all. It was just—he was still getting used to being left alone with the guy. It was hard to know what to say when it was just the two of them.

"How are you and Nancy doing?"

Jonathan jumped a little, caught off guard by Steve's question, giving the other boy a quick glance. He swallowed and turned away again.

"G-good," Jonathan got out. "We're good, we—" He let his head fall, staring at the spot of floor between his feet. "Things are good."

"How long have you two been together now?"

Jonathan's head jerked up again, giving Steve a curious look. A little wary of how genuinely curious Steve seemed to be about his ex-girlfriend and her new boyfriend. Well, sort of new.

"Just over two months," Jonathan said slowly. "Why do you ask?"

Steve shrugged, the gesture coming off as forcibly casual. "Just making conversation, Byers." He shot the other boy a glance, and let out a sigh. "Okay, you know what I just need to say it," Steve said, almost sounding like he was talking to himself. He turned to face Jonathan head on, bringing their knees dangerously close to knocking together.

"I never apologized for all the shit I said," Steve said, looking at Jonathan seriously. "That day you punched my face in."

Jonathan looked concerned. "I shouldn't have—"

"After what I said to you?" Steve cut in. "Don't be stupid, of course you should have. And besides," Steve laughed, gesturing to himself. "I'm good as new, nothing to worry about."

Jonathan frowned. "Then why—"

"I said terrible things about you, about your family," Steve said. "And I wanted to apologize, not just 'cause I hurt you, but because I want you to know—that I *know* now how messed up it was to say all that shit. Shouldn't have brought your dad into it, shouldn't have brought up Will—you're *not* a screw up," Steve said earnestly. "And I'm sorry I teased you about being queer," Steve finished, his voice suddenly growing soft.

Jonathan continued to be confused. He had just begun to ask Steve what had brought on this apology, after so much time had gone by, wanted to say it was no big deal, they were all friends now so what did it matter—but he was interrupted by Steve pulling him into a haphazard kiss.

It was rushed and hard, and when Steve pulled back, Jonathan was frozen in place, staring at him—not in a bad way, just *shocked*. Steve tried to grin, play it cool; he meant to do that and wasn't at all flustered by what he just did. And then he finally remembered to explain himself.

"Figured it was a shit move to give you grief for being queer when I'm—you're not the only one," Steve said hurriedly.

Jonathan was still trying to find his voice. "But, I don't—I don't *like* boys," he managed.

Steve looked genuinely confused. "Hold on, I thought—are you sure?"

Jonathan didn't have the words to say what he was feeling, so he settled for giving Steve a helpless shrug.

"Maybe you just need some convincing," Steve laughed, still trying to go for that carefree jock vibe. But his eyes darted anxiously all over Jonathan's face, like he was trying to figure out what he was

thinking.

Jonathan just stared back at Steve, trying to wrap his head around the fact that *Steve Harrington* wanted to kiss him for some reason. And probably not just to mess with him? *You're not the only one*, he'd said.

And then Jonathan threw caution to the wind. Took Steve's face in his hands. Kissed him as desperately as the first time he kissed—

"Oh!"

Nancy, shit!

Jonathan pulled back at once, careful not to look at either Steve, who was doing a miserable job at hiding his growing smile, or Nancy, who was standing in the doorway of her room holding the pizza Jonathan had completely forgotten she'd gone downstairs to wait for. He just froze in place, waiting for Nancy to say something, trying to fight the feeling of shame in the pit of his stomach. Not because he and Steve—he was *dating* Nancy. He wasn't supposed to go around kissing other people. Which was exactly what Nancy just caught him doing.

"You two were kissing," Nancy said softly, coming in to set the pizza down on her bedside table. Stating the obvious.

"It was my idea," Steve jumped in, like he was trying to play it off as nothing—down to the small shake of his head, a wave of his hand. Nancy took a seat beside Jonathan on her bed, though her eyes didn't leave Steve's.

"Do you two—like each other?" she asked in that casual yet hesitant tone of hers.

And then Jonathan and Steve locked eyes, just for a moment. Did they know the answer to that question?

"I don't know," Jonathan mumbled, lowering his head again, away from Steve and still not looking at Nancy. He realized he'd grabbed a wad of Nancy's sheets in his fist, and let go at once, anxiously smoothing them out again. Just trying to force himself to be calm.

"Well, who kissed who?" Nancy asked, laughing lightly. Steve's mouth

opened and closed, and it looked as though he was struggling to decide whether to point at himself or Jonathan.

"The first time it was me," Steve got out eventually, "but—"

"The first time?" Nancy laughed, smiling, looking back and forth between Steve and Jonathan. "I was hardly gone five minutes."

"Steve kissed me first," Jonathan repeated quietly. "I told him I'm not queer," he said, hating the tight feeling in his stomach, just because he'd said those words so many times before, defending himself, never stopping to think if it was actually true. "And then he said maybe I needed some convincing, and—" Another helpless shrug. "I kissed him. Just to see..." Jonathan started wringing his hands. "I don't know."

Nancy laid a gentle hand on Jonathan's thigh, and he started at once, turning to finally meet her eyes.

"Do you two want to talk for a minute, or..."

Jonathan turned back to Steve in a panic, hoping his friend would decide for him. Steve had gotten them into this—he could get them out.

Unless.

Unless Steve wanted to act like nothing had happened. And damn it, Jonathan wanted answers.

"I think we should talk," Jonathan stammered at last, "but don't go," he added, taking Nancy's hand in his. Her eyes widened in surprise, and he felt a hand bat at his arm, turning to see Steve give him a look that clearly said *what the hell, dude?*

"You kissed me," Jonathan said again. "You know I'm dating Nancy, but you kissed me anyway. What did you expect to happen?"

Jonathan and Nancy watched him carefully for an answer, and Steve just laughed in spite of himself, throwing his hands helplessly in the air.

"Jesus, I don't know! I've been having—weird dreams," Steve said, letting his hands fall to his side again. Nancy raised an eyebrow at that. "And I figured—hey, I like Nancy and Byers likes Nancy. She likes *him*, and..." A quick shrug, like Steve was trying his best to act disinterested. "And, turns out I like him too," he added quietly. "So I thought—maybe we could work something out, you know?"

Nancy nodded slowly, eyes not leaving Steve once, like she was starting to get it. Jonathan just looked back and forth between his friends, still confused as hell.

"Like a polyamorous relationship," Nancy said, understanding dawning on her face. Both boys started frowning. Nancy let out a laugh. "A relationship comprised of more than two people," she explained.

Jonathan turned to stare at Steve, still frowning, trying to figure out what the fuck was going on. "You want to *date* me?" he asked.

Steve just mouthed at him again for a moment, clearly looking to Nancy for permission to answer that honestly. Her bright eyes never left his, so Steve figured he might as well spill.

"Sure, I would date you. You're great." Jonathan felt his face grow warm. "No one has to know," Steve added quickly, cutting off Jonathan's protests. "Just—" Steve shrugged casually, grinning again. "Just the three of us."

Back to Nancy. "Would you be okay with that?" Jonathan asked incredulously.

Nancy just smiled up at him and gave his hand a gentle squeeze. "Hey, I've dated Steve before. And I don't mind sharing." She tilted her head up the tiniest bit and pressed a kiss to Jonathan's cheek. "Up to you," she whispered, giving him an encouraging smile.

"And this—the idea of this doesn't seem *weird* to you?" Jonathan asked, wondering for a moment if his girlfriend had been replaced with someone else.

"I like both of you!" Nancy protested gently, using their linked hands

to nudge Jonathan's leg. "If this is an arrangement that can make all three of us happy..." She looked past Jonathan to Steve, giving him a shy glance. "We could at least give it a try."

Steve's face lit up triumphantly, and Nancy cut in, making sure he didn't get his hopes up. "If we all agree to it," she said, giving Steve an almost warning look before turning back to Jonathan. "Like I said. Up to you."

"I don't know," Jonathan said, suddenly jumping to his feet, looking like he wanted to start pacing. "I don't know, I—"

"Hey, it's a lot, I get it," Steve said soothingly, getting up to follow Jonathan, putting a hand on his shoulder—only for Jonathan to flinch and spin around, grabbing Steve's wrist. The world seemed to freeze as the two stared at each other.

Somehow, Nancy could tell it was a make or break moment. No one dared breathe—

And the silence was broken by a dull thud as Jonathan pinned Steve up against the wall, kissing him desperately once again, fists curled in the collar of Steve's shirt. Steve only had time to let out a murmur of surprise before Jonathan consumed him; he scrabbled for a place to put his hands, settling to leave them on Jonathan's hips, keeping the other boy pulled up tight against him.

Not that Jonathan needed encouragement. Nancy could hear him moaning softly with each hurried pass at Steve's lips, saw the way he was almost swaying on the spot, back and forth, *feeling* the rhythm of kissing Steve.

Only to drop everything and step back, watching Steve carefully to see how he'd respond. A beat passed, and all Steve could do was grin, amazed.

"Hey, see!" he laughed breathlessly. "You just needed to give it a chance—"

Steve was cut off by Jonathan's mouth crashing against his own once again, hands now cupping his face. And then Jonathan pulled back,

just barely, grinning madly. "Wish it had always been this easy to shut you up, Harrington." And then he kissed him again. Just to make a point.

So that was how it all began. A few hurried kisses in Nancy's bedroom, and somehow nothing changed, and *everything* changed. They laid side by side on Nancy's bed, stuffing their faces with pizza like the teenagers they were. They complained about school, and for Nancy and Jonathan, about their kid brothers, and all three made a point of dancing around the subject of all the terrifying shit they'd been through in the past year. So that was nothing new.

But it was new for Jonathan to be wedged in between not one but *two* people who apparently had feelings for him. It was new to feel thrilled, exhilarated just to have Steve's leg brush against his. It was new for Nancy to smother him with affection with Steve *right there* next to them.

Having two partners was new. Having a boyfriend was new.

Jonathan tried not to think about it. So he was with Steve now too. How different could things get?

That question would be answered soon enough. About a week later, in fact.

"*You were so good,*" a voice was murmuring. "*You were so good for us, babe.*"

Jonathan stirred a little. He felt... warm. Content, somehow? He realized someone was carding their fingers through his hair, and on his other side, another hand was gently tracing patterns on his bare arm.

"*Man, he just passed the fuck out,*" another voice laughed. "*You'd think this was his first time or something.*"

And then his eyes fluttered open, in time to see Nancy give Steve the tiniest shake of her head, the two of them positioned on either side of

him. "Maybe it *was* his first time," she said gently.

Jonathan sat up with a start, and Nancy and Steve pulled back at once, giving him space. He looked around the room wildly—not his bedroom, but not Nancy's either. Did that mean—*shit*, he was in Steve's bed. Steve Harrington's bedroom, nestled in between Steve and Nancy.

"Why—why—" Jonathan's gaze darted back and forth between the two of them, not even sure what he wanted to ask. His friends shared a worried look, and before he knew it, they'd each placed a gentle hand on his shoulders, trying to get him to sit back against Steve's headboard. Jonathan's eyes grew wide as he realized Steve and Nancy were topless, and he was too. At least Nancy still had her bra on. He looked down to the sheet draped across their hips, all the flashes of bare skin peeking out from beneath. *Shit*, no one was wearing anything down there, either.

The sight made Jonathan jump again, and Nancy took his hand in her free one at once.

"It's okay, Jonathan," she said gently. "It's just us. Just me and Steve. No one else is in the house."

"Do you not remember?" Steve asked, unable to keep that tiny hint of laughter out of his voice.

"We—kissing," Jonathan managed, resisting the urge to draw his knees up to his chest like he was a child. "I remember kissing. Both of you?" he asked, looking to Nancy for confirmation.

"Both of us," Nancy said, nodding encouragingly. "Steve thought it might be nice if the three of us could have some alone time, so we went up to his bedroom and—"

"Hooked up," Steve supplied. Jonathan turned to him, borderline panic creeping onto his face. That was an *incredibly* vague term.

"We took it slow," Nancy added at once. Steve raised an eyebrow at her—all three of them were naked. It would be hard to call that *taking it slow*. "Well, lots of checking in," she amended. "Making sure

we didn't do anything that any of us was uncomfortable with."

Jonathan just gave her a helpless look. That still didn't tell him what they *did*.

"We didn't do anything—*penetrative*," Nancy explained, wincing a little at her poor word choice. She wasn't sure how else to say it. Steve just continued to stare at her, shaking his head a little—*what the hell, Nance?*

"What actually happened?" Jonathan asked, finally having found his voice.

Steve opened his mouth to speak, and found he *couldn't*. He forced a smile on his face. "Just, *touching*, really. I kissed you, and Nance kissed you, you kissed us back—we all kissed each other, really, and obviously clothes came off, and..." He gave Nancy a look. *Help*, he mouthed.

"We just wanted to make you feel good," Nancy said gently, lifting a hand to cup Jonathan's cheek, guiding him over to look at her. "We could tell—I could tell you were still a little apprehensive about all this, and we just wanted to show you a good time," she finished, smiling hesitantly up at him.

"I wouldn't call it sex," Steve added. He shrugged one shoulder. "Not really. I mean, sure we all got a little turned on, but—" He grinned. "Like Nance said, just having a good time."

"And what, I just fell asleep when it was over?" Jonathan asked, giving the two of them a skeptical look. "Made out with you two and just passed out?"

Steve and Nancy shared another worried look. "We might have overwhelmed you a little bit," Nancy admitted, looking guilty.

"Yeah, it seemed like you weren't used to getting so much attention, Byers," Steve added.

"Well, that's because I'm not!" Jonathan snapped, laughing a little in spite of himself as he shoved the sheets aside and clambered over Nancy to get out of bed, quickly searching the floor for his boxers

and tugging them on at once, his back turned on Steve and Nancy. "Nancy was the first girl—the first *person* I ever..."

Jonathan stopped, realizing the room had gone deathly silent, as if his friends had frozen in place behind him, afraid to even breathe. He turned around to find both staring at him—Nancy's expression soft and gentle, Steve's almost shocked. "What?"

Nancy looked away at once, composing herself. "Nothing," she said quickly. Steve just kept staring.

"Jesus, Byers. That's kind of depressing," Steve laughed.

Jonathan swallowed, feeling himself grow defensive. "Oh, and you're surprised? You expected me to be getting a lot of action?" he asked, trying not to throw the words in Steve's face but feeling himself do so anyway. "Hate to break it to you, Harrington, but I can count on one hand the number of *friends* I have, let alone—I don't exactly have a string of exes so long I can't—"

"Jonathan!" Nancy cried. "*Please.*" He shut up at once. And she gave Steve a look too. "You weren't helping." Steve at least had the decency to look ashamed. Nancy let out a frustrated huff, trying to get her thoughts together. "Look, I didn't think this would be easy," she said softly, both boys listening raptly. "But if we want this to work, we'll have to be patient with each other—*talk* to each other. And understand that we don't all have the same experiences," Nancy finished, directing that last part at Steve. When he gave her a slight nod, Nancy turned back to Jonathan, stretching out her hand.

"C'mere," she said. "Just to lie down with us," Nancy added when she noticed Jonathan's hesitation. So with a sigh, he climbed back into bed with Steve and Nancy—once again finding himself in the middle. At Steve's urging, he lay down again, and his friends—his *girlfriend and boyfriend*, he reminded himself—took a moment to make themselves comfortable, both opting use to Jonathan's chest and shoulders as a pillow.

"Is all this okay with you?" Nancy asked gently, looking up at Jonathan through her eyelashes. "We can backtrack, take things slower if—"

"No," Jonathan interrupted. "No," he said again, calmer. He tugged his arms out from underneath Steve and Nancy so he could wrap them around their shoulders, holding them close. "It's okay," he told Nancy, dropping a kiss on her forehead. "Promise. I mean—" He looked the other way to smirk at Steve. "Harrington's a bit of an asshole, sure, but I bet I'll grow to love him."

"Byers, you're breaking my heart," Steve teased, lifting a hand to pull Jonathan in for a soft kiss. It was just a touch of Steve's lips against his own, but somehow it seemed to knock the breath out of him—he looked down at Steve in wonder. And just like that, Jonathan could feel that content, warm feeling come back, so he let himself smile and snuggled up against his two partners. And everything was okay.

When Jonathan came home that night, he shouldn't have been surprised to find Hopper and his mom sitting side by side on their crummy little couch, sharing a cigarette, talking softly. It was good seeing his mom smile like that. She was doing so much better.

But that didn't mean her anxiety went away completely—she turned around the second she heard Jonathan close the door behind him, and she didn't hide her look of panic quite quickly enough.

"Hey, sweetie," Joyce said, taking a moment to hand the cigarette back to Hopper. "Did you have a good time with Nancy?"

Jonathan didn't answer for a moment—his stomach was already twisting itself into knots. "Mom," Jonathan said, voice shaking. "There's something I have to tell you."

And that was enough to set her off. Her eyes went wide, hands shaking. He saw Hopper sit up a little behind her, watching Jonathan carefully. "Something bad?" Joyce asked, almost a whisper.

Jonathan's voice broke. "*I don't know,*" he whimpered. He didn't, he didn't know how his mom would react. But now she was panicking, on her feet already and rushing toward him.

"Jonathan, what happened?" she demanded. "Where's Will? Is he—"

"It's not about Will, mom," Jonathan cut in, his voice already raw from holding back tears. "It's about me."

"Oh." She glanced back to Hopper, who was on his feet as well. "Do you want—should Hopper step outside a moment?"

Jonathan looked back and forth between the police chief and his mom, trying to make himself speak, but all he could do was cross his arms tight across his chest. Like he was trying to hold himself together.

Hopper got the hint. "I'll give you two a minute," he muttered, putting a hand on Joyce's shoulder before removing himself to the front porch.

"Let's sit, honey," Joyce said frantically, putting her hands on Jonathan's arms and gently guiding him to the couch. "Just remember, you can talk to me—you can tell me anything, you know that, right?"

Jonathan gave his mom a shaky nod, sending a few tears running down his cheeks. She was rubbing his back, anything to calm him down, but watching him like a hawk.

"Mom," Jonathan began. And then he shook his head, closing in on himself.

"You can tell me," Joyce repeated, clearly trying to keep the frantic tone out of her voice. "Jonathan, whatever it is, we will *get through it together*," she said firmly, giving her son's shoulder a squeeze. "I promise."

Jonathan took a long, shaky breath. Staring straight ahead. Not wanting to see the look on his mother's face if his worst fears were true. "Is it okay if I like boys?" he asked in a whisper.

His mom let out a soft gasp, and just like that, the tension was gone. Joyce let her hand fall, gently taking one of Jonathan's in her own. She held his hand tight, taking a moment to gather her thoughts.

"Yes, of course," she whispered. "Jonathan, you love *whoever* you want to love, and if anyone—"

"I'm dating Steve Harrington and Nancy Wheeler."

Joyce pulled back in surprise. "O-oh," she said lightly. "Steve *and* Nancy?"

Just like that, he was sniffing back tears again. "I'm sorry," Jonathan said at once. "I know it's weird, and maybe even worse than just dating a boy, but they make me happy, and—"

"And that's all that matters," Joyce cut in gently. "As long as you're happy." She gave her son a shaky smile. "As long as you're happy."

The next day, Jonathan came home from school to find a somewhat beat up shoe box sitting on his bed. Curious, he dropped his backpack to the ground and walked over for a closer look, cursing in surprise when he lifted the lid off. Jonathan frowned as he tossed the lid to the side and started to paw through the contents of the box.

Sitting inside was not one, but two boxes of condoms, a bottle of lube, and some sort of pamphlet from the National Institute of Health about preventing the spread of—

"Hey, honey."

Jonathan closed the pamphlet in a hurry, getting ready to hide everything that was sitting out on his bed, but instead letting out a sigh of relief when he turned to see his mom leaning up against his bedroom door. She had her arms crossed, and the expectant smile she was giving him told Jonathan at once this was her doing.

"Mom, what is all this stuff?" Jonathan asked, dropping the pamphlet back into the shoe box. "I mean, why did you leave it just *sitting* here, I—"

"I just wanted you to be prepared," Joyce said at once, closing the distance between herself and her son. "I want you to be safe, I—"

Jonathan looked distraught. "Okay, okay, I will be, but—"

"You hear so many *scary things* nowadays about what can happen to men who love other men," Joyce went on anxiously, as if Jonathan

hadn't spoken, "and I just want you to be safe, I don't want *anything* to happen to my boys—"

"All right!" Jonathan cried, hoping the whole *mom, you're embarrassing me* thing was coming through nice and clear. "Mom, I—thanks," Jonathan sighed at last. He knew his mom's heart was in the right place.

She just flashed him one of her nervous smiles. "I just want you to keep yourself safe," she said again. "And now that you've found all that, maybe you can put it away under your bed or something," Joyce suggested. *Somewhere Will won't see it.*

A few days later, Jonathan offered to pick up Will from a DnD session at Mike's house. Will being the angel that he was, was already waiting upstairs when Jonathan arrived.

"Hey, bud," Jonathan said, already starting to smile, just happy to see his little brother. "How'd it go today?"

"Really good!" Will said, nodding eagerly. "Mike says we're really close to finding the main monster, and—" Will stopped, cocking his head curiously to the side. "What's that on your neck, Jonathan?"

Jonathan's eyes went wide in a panic. *Oh, shit.* He clapped a hand over the side of his neck and started to stammer out an answer, but it was too late—Mike had just slipped out from the basement, and he saw exactly what Will was asking about.

"Ugh, my sister must have done that," Mike said, making a face. "Gross."

"What's gross?"

Jonathan fought back a groan, as Steve stepped out from behind the door to the basement too. He'd forgotten Steve had started joining the boys for DnD, since Dustin had talked him into playing. This day just kept getting better.

"Nancy left a *giant* hickey on Jonathan's neck," Mike said immediately, taking pleasure in teasing Jonathan, and knowing

something Steve didn't. "It was like—*that big*," Mike said, holding up his clenched fist to demonstrate, exaggerating a little. And then he sprinted upstairs. "Bye, Will!" he called, waving wildly. And then he was gone.

Meanwhile, Jonathan was trying desperately not to look embarrassed, not in front of his little brother. Steve just approached him slowly, smirking a little as he moved Jonathan's hand away—he let out a short laugh when he saw just how obvious the mark on Jonathan's neck was. Steve gave the spot a gentle nudge, and Jonathan breathed in sharply. Hopefully it all looked innocent enough to Will, but it sure as hell didn't seem that way to Jonathan, not with the way that heated, thrilling feeling had started unfurling in his gut.

"Jesus, Byers," Steve murmured, just loud enough for Jonathan to hear, "you're just walking around with that uncovered? What are people gonna think, huh?"

Their eyes locked, and Jonathan just knew they were both thinking about the night before, when Steve gave him that hickey. The three of them had been tussling around in Steve's bed, and Steve had managed to clamber on top of Jonathan, grabbing a fistful of his floppy hair to hold him still. There had been a definite shift in that moment, they could feel it. Jonathan had gone completely still, and Nancy looked on intently—she knew just how much Jonathan loved having his hair messed with, gentle or not.

And Jonathan remembered the slow grin that had appeared on Steve's face, like he was getting an idea. How Steve had carefully tightened his grip, tugged Jonathan's head to the side to provide better access to his bared neck. And the way Steve had started kissing, biting, teasing him right there, Jonathan knew Steve had wanted to leave a mark. And he just kept at it, and in that moment, Jonathan somehow found himself thinking that not only could he be attracted to boys, but maybe he could fall in love with them too.